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Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The 2004 report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations[1] requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on progress made in the implementation of the recommendations contained therein. The present report describes the dramatic increase in demands for United Nations peacekeeping over the past year and in that context highlights areas in which progress is being made and continued progress is needed, focusing in particular on resource generation and rapid deployment requirements, operational demands in implementing complex mandates and linkages with regional and subregional organizations. It invites the Special Committee to consider a number of new proposals, including strategic reserves and standing police capacities, that would help fill ongoing gaps in United Nations peacekeeping capabilities.

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I. Introduction

1. In the past four years, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Secretariat have worked concertedly to strengthen United Nations peacekeeping, implementing the reforms emanating from the Brahimi report (see A/55/305-S/2000/809) and the subsequent sessions of the Special Committee. Even as this work is ongoing, it is clear that the reform efforts have produced a strengthened Department of Peacekeeping Operations with important new capabilities.

2. It is also clear that the demands on peacekeeping and related field operations are growing and changing dramatically, reaching an unprecedented scale and degree of complexity. Over the past year four complex operations were either newly mandated and deployed or significantly expanded — in Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi, Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This surge amplified a trend already under way in 2002 and 2003. The total number of uniformed personnel now stands at approximately 62,800, up from 51,600 in March 2004, and civilian personnel at over 11,000, deployed in 17 peacekeeping and related field operations led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

3. The surge in demand is a welcome sign of increased opportunities to advance the cause of peace in many areas, but the scale and complexity of the new operations is stretching the capacities of the international community as a whole, and we cannot expect any diminishment of demand. On the contrary, we will likely face a new mission in the Sudan and a possible expansion of United Nations operations in Iraq in the coming year.

4. These developments raise a number of important questions. First, can the United Nations meet the simultaneous demands of planning, deploying, supporting and managing operations on this scale, or indeed, should it? Pressures on a stretched system were mitigated somewhat by the support of Member States and by new mechanisms and resources that four years of reform provided, not least the increased planning and support staff available at Headquarters. However, the assumptions underpinning those reforms have been outstripped by realities. The strategic deployment stocks, for example, were configured to support the rapid deployment of just one complex operation of 10,000 uniformed personnel. That so much has been achieved is remarkable, but this level of operational activity is not easily managed or sustained, or necessarily within the system's limits. Perhaps the time has come to consider the basic policy question of how many complex missions the United Nations should manage at once, lest overextension lead to failure.

5. A second, related, question is whether the necessary resources can be generated and deployed rapidly enough to support United Nations peacekeeping operations. Recent experience has shown that with capacities such as pre-mandate commitment authority and strategic deployment stocks in place, early planning and deployment capacity has improved; but gaps remain, including in the generation of civilian and uniformed personnel and in niche and enabling capabilities. These gaps must be addressed, and the present report outlines two important new proposals, for strategic reserves and a standing police capacity, that would help.

6. The complexity of United Nations operations is also creating demands for further integration across the United Nations system and beyond. The fundamental security tasks of peacekeeping operations remain the foundation for many complex mandates, but success depends on concurrent progress along multiple tracks of the

mandate, including, inter alia, political, humanitarian, development and human rights tasks. The majority of operations led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations today have mandates that extend beyond the security-related tasks traditionally linked to the term peacekeeping, and, indeed, they might more accurately be termed peace operations. In some cases, such as those of the United Nations operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan, critical security-related tasks are carried out by other organizations. That the terms peacekeeping, peace support and peace operations are synonymous to some and different to others is indicative of the complexity that has come to characterize the field. The time may very well be upon us to discuss seriously this terminology. This is not a merely semantic matter. A common understanding would further promote common approaches and cooperation between the various actors engaged in the tasks of complex peacekeeping operations today.

7. The Special Committee has underscored the need for common approaches and comprehensive strategies linking post-conflict peacebuilding and development support in the transition from conflict to peace. We have learned some lessons on the design of integrated missions; where appropriate, we are developing templates, but each operation is to a great extent sui generis, facing unique challenges, with different mandates and resources. We must be prepared with early analysis and integrated planning to deploy operations based on complementarity, flexibility and clear divisions of labour. There has been progress towards clarifying system-wide United Nations approaches in some key areas, such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the rule of law. More progress is required in others, such as security-sector reform. Implementing complex peacekeeping mandates requires further integration at various levels, in planning and managing operations at the Headquarters level, and operational integration on the ground to link the mission, the United Nations country team and other partners.

8. Globally, peacekeeping demands today outstrip the capacities of any one organization, and it is vital to continue to build up the operational linkages between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations whose services will also be called upon. We must further define how the United Nations and other organizations should work together and how peacekeeping demands should be shared. In some cases, United Nations peacekeeping will simply be the wrong tool, and it is vital that we recognize when this is so. It remains appropriate for situations where there is a viable peace agreement, supported by the consent of the parties. Where robust United Nations peacekeeping is required, it is to deter relatively isolated spoilers who would use force to derail a peace process that otherwise enjoys wide support. Situations where United Nations peacekeeping is not appropriate, such as those that call for stability operations in non-permissive environments, will no doubt arise. For these, capabilities exist in some regional organizations, but not all. Even where conditions for United Nations peacekeeping exist, the burden is increasingly shared with regional and subregional organizations. The United Nations may in some cases deploy to take over their operations, in others hand over to them or work side by side with them. The right combination will vary depending upon circumstances, including the political will of the Member States, as well as the capacities and mandates of the organizations concerned. The aim must be to develop a system of international capacities that is complementary, flexible and nimble.

9. Efforts to enhance African peacekeeping capacity are ongoing, and the United Nations is committed to assisting in this regard, recognizing the importance of

regional solutions to Africa's challenges. However, the logistical, financial and operational support necessary for multiple, extended operations will take some time to put in place. To shift the burden of peacekeeping precipitously onto African organizations would be both unfair to them and a disservice to the people caught in conflict and in need of peacekeeping support. Furthermore, peacekeeping is most successful when it is an expression of truly international commitment to peace and security. One aim of enhancing African peacekeeping capacities must be for African peacekeepers to serve in operations outside Africa, and for other regions, including developed countries, to be represented among peacekeepers in Africa.

10. The United Nations must move forward on three simultaneous fronts to face the broad and wide-ranging challenges that remain before us: first, we must bolster the capacity to prepare for operations, rapidly generating and deploying the right resources; second, we must improve the integration of peace support efforts at various levels; and, third, we must build flexible operational linkages with regional and subregional organizations and, where appropriate, assist in building their capacities.

11. These issues are at the heart of many of the Committee's recommendations, related as they are to resource generation, rapid deployment and the comprehensive strategies required for the conduct of complex operations. The present report, therefore, focuses in particular on recommendations in these critical areas that merit special attention in the context of the surge in peacekeeping. While it does not cover every single point raised by the Committee, I wish to reassure Committee members that other matters will be addressed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the context of the Committee's meetings.

II. Preparing missions for success: resource generation and rapid deployment

12. As the Special Committee has noted, the early success of peacekeeping operations continues to depend to a significant degree on the ability to raise the necessary personnel, uniformed and civilian, and deploy them rapidly. Rapid deployment mechanisms, such as the pre-mandate commitment authority and strategic deployment stocks, have strengthened United Nations capacity to provide logistical support to personnel deployments. The recent force generation experience has also been encouraging, thanks to the many Member States that have contributed to this effort. However, key gaps remain. A capability to respond to threats rapidly is required. For police mandates, technical expertise in planning and establishing police development programmes is needed early on, yet current standby arrangements have not provided such expertise as and when needed. Difficulties also remain in the resourcing of niche capabilities and enabling units. Strategic lift options are also limited. Progress in resolving these limitations will better prepare our missions to fulfil their mandates effectively.

A. Strategic reserves

13. Sound and prudent military planning calls for any complex military operation to have, on call, a reserve or reaction capability able to respond to crisis. Yet United Nations peacekeeping operations are often deployed without this requirement, either

because the mission troop ceilings do not allow for a reserve or because the capability is unavailable, or both. As the challenges facing peacekeeping mount, so does the potential for failure, and the inherent cost, should a mission be unable to manage a crisis effectively. It is essential that we be better able to respond to the sorts of situation that faced the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in 2000 and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in 2003 (Ituri) and 2004 (Bukavu). Without a reserve, missions have few ready options to respond to dangerously unfolding circumstances. Whether the response is diverting existing mission forces and resources to try to deal with the crisis, generating fresh forces or appealing for military assistance outside the United Nations force, each has its shortcomings. The first risks an ever increasing spiral of "mission creep" and diversion from existing mandate requirements with resulting losses in time and costs, the second takes too long, and the third comes with no guarantee of a positive response.

14. In its 2004 report[1] the Special Committee welcomed further study and proposals of the Secretariat with respect to rapidly deployable reserve forces. The High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change has also underscored the importance of a reserve capacity for United Nations peacekeeping (see A/59/565 and Corr.1, para. 219). Several options for drawing on a reliable reserve have been examined, including deploying forces from other United Nations missions, reinforcing existing troop contingents or finding new ones, defining conditional arrangements with Member States or regional organizations, and establishing forces specifically for this purpose. In all but the last option there are significant penalties, either in terms of time, implications for other missions redeploying their troops or uncertain availability.

15. A strategic reserve for United Nations peacekeeping is therefore proposed. As currently envisaged, it would be divided into a number of task forces of some 1,250 troops each. Each task force would be held within the national command of a troop contributor and would be a combined-arms force, with enabling units, capable of sustained operations. The task forces would ideally be drawn from a geographical range of troop-contributing countries, each of which would secure prior political and legislative agreement to deploy its forces to predetermined missions, obviating the often time-consuming process of securing such agreement immediately prior to deployment. If achieved, this aspect of reliability would represent a significant advance.

16. The task forces would be configured in a structure of "graduated readiness", with the lead elements held at highest readiness and other elements ready at longer notice, enabling a graduated response to a crisis or crises. Once deployed, the forces would come under command of the Force Commander. The strategic reserve would deploy for a specific duration and tasks and return to the troop-contributing country upon their completion. Its tasks would focus on stabilization but could also include others, such as providing an interim capability pending deployment of other forces or surge manning for a specific event such as elections.

17. A reserve shared among missions would make good use of the limited supply of capable forces and would also send a deterrent signal to potential "spoilers". Besides its operational capabilities, a strategic reserve could provide significant cost efficiencies.

18. I urge Member States to give every consideration to this concept, which meets an existing requirement and is envisaged as complementary to other, similar capabilities available to the international community. Not all eventualities would be met by a reserve of this nature, and, certainly, circumstances can be foreseen for which a multinational force or other arrangement would be required. It will need to be discussed and developed further in consultation with Member States, including with respect to financial implications, strategic lift requirements and other aspects.

B. Standing civilian police capacity

19. United Nations police personnel have gone from a total of 4,476 in December 2003 to 6,772 in 12 missions in December 2004. The generation of police officers with specialized skills, including a working knowledge of French, has been particularly challenging. Mandated tasks set for police require personnel able to help build sustainable police structures, to link police activity to broader rule-of-law strategies and to transfer technical expertise in a range of skills. They call for highly qualified police officers and civilians — experts in such areas as police policy and planning, operations, law and procedures, administration, budgets, personnel and logistics, intelligence and investigations.

20. Expertise in these areas is an ongoing requirement in United Nations missions assisting security-sector reform and the re-establishment of the rule of law, yet this requirement is often unmet, as officers currently deployed to peacekeeping operations, although possessing good operational skills, do not commonly have such expertise. The Brahimi report proposed a standby arrangement to meet this need, but the results of the 100-person on-call roster have been mixed. Political clearance at the national level can slow deployment. Additional efforts are under way to identify, select and train qualified police officers for rapid deployment through training programmes, the database of selection assistance teams and country visits, but the standby arrangements remain unreliable. In paragraph 223 of its report, the High-level Panel also identified this gap and recommended that such a police capacity be made reliably available to the United Nations.

21. There is therefore a need to shift to a standing capacity of police, employed professionally for two to three years, to provide this expertise. Such a capacity exists at Headquarters, but a similar one is needed for missions. A small group of up to 100 police is proposed to deploy in teams of 10 to 20 in mission areas to support early planning and needs assessments, build up mission headquarters and set up a well-functioning civilian police component, and to articulate and implement programmes to develop sustainable local police structures, as well as to conduct periodic evaluations related to mandate implementation. The personnel of the standing capacity would predominantly serve in missions and also engage in developing guidelines, training materials and integrated rule-of-law strategies. Standing-body personnel would have extensive backgrounds in police planning and development, as well as leadership and managerial qualities. If approved, the capacity would be piloted with a first tranche of 20 officers, to allow for a review of the concept before proceeding to establish the full capacity. Police officers and some civilian experts would be drawn from a cross section of Member States, providing the United Nations with readily available, skilled, trained police cognizant of local legal culture, history and police practices. They would be trained in transferring

their skills both to the mandated United Nations civilian police elements and to local police and regional organizations.

22. The concept will need to be discussed and developed further in consultation and partnership with Member States, including with respect to financial implications. I urge Member States to give the concept their full consideration.

C. Force generation, United Nations Standby Arrangements System and rapidly deployable headquarters

23. The massive force-generation exercise of the past year has been accompanied by increased efforts on the part of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to engage with new and potential contributors of military observers, civilian police and troops. Since October 2003, 11 new contributor countries have come on board, and a number of existing ones have dramatically increased contributions.

24. There remains a need to increase the presence of women among military and civilian police personnel. As of June 2004, women represented 1 per cent of military personnel and 5 per cent of civilian police personnel assigned by Member States to serve in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

25. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has developed policy guidelines on reconnaissance visits to ensure that troop contributions are ready in time for rapid deployment. In line with these guidelines, the Department undertakes early liaison with potential troop-contributing countries so as to gauge interest in pending missions and to brief on and clarify all issues related to likely operational plans and force requirements; consultations continue throughout the planning and force-generation processes.

26. The United Nations Standby Arrangements System has supported the surge in peacekeeping and the deployment of operational troops in a more rapid manner than previously possible. The United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB), for example, was set up in 116 days. The on-call list element of the Standby Arrangements System has been used to generate the Force Headquarters of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), ONUB and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Member States were invited to provide rapidly deployable staff officers and military observers to make up the integrated force headquarters and military observer groups. The structure of the generic mission headquarters on-call list has been revised and upgraded, with new posts and job descriptions.

D. Materiel readiness and reimbursement

27. With a gap between the troops available and the materiel required, it remains important for those with resources to assist those ready to serve. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations continues to facilitate bilateral and other arrangements to overcome major equipment and self-sustainment shortfalls faced by troop-contributing countries. In UNOCI, to give just one example, separate memorandums of understanding between the Organization and troop-contributing countries were arranged to provide major equipment and self-sustainment services to several re-hatted African contingents. The Department continues its efforts to ensure that the

contingent-owned equipment (COE) system and other mechanisms to overcome individual contributors' shortfalls are applied in a proactive and flexible way and will continue to facilitate efforts by contributors to assist one another.

28. Reimbursements for COE and troop costs are currently running on a four-month cycle. By mid-December 2004, claims will have been reimbursed for all units with signed memorandums of understanding for the period up to September 2004, subject to the availability of funds in the related missions' accounts. The Secretariat is reviewing and assessing possibilities to facilitate faster reimbursement to support rapid deployment by troop-contributing countries in the Standby Arrangements System.

29. The Secretariat presented a paper on a mechanism to provide guidance and decision-making on the COE system to the 2004 Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment. In my report on the 2004 COE Working Group (A/59/292), I re-emphasized the need for a channel of consultation between the Secretariat and Member States to ensure that the COE system is dynamic and keeps pace with changes in the peacekeeping environment between the triennial meetings of the Working Group. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is currently developing several proposals for improving these procedures and would welcome the opportunity to brief and to seek the guidance of Member States as to their relative merit and priority.

E. Strategic lift, enabling and niche capabilities

30. The United Nations does not have strategic-lift units on standby to move troops and contingent-owned equipment to and from mission areas, nor does it have the lift capacity to promptly and effectively deploy a reserve force. This gap has previously been flagged by the Special Committee. Little progress has been made in reliably filling it, and the global bidding procedure takes a minimum of three to six weeks. In paragraph 217 of its report the High-level Panel recommended that Member States with airlift and sealift capabilities make them available to the United Nations on a negotiated fee-based structure.

31. Enabling units such as force headquarters companies, military police units, vertical and horizontal construction engineer companies, and level 2 and 3 hospitals are critical for the effectiveness of peacekeeping forces in the field, but they also remain in high demand in all militaries. With the notable exception of helicopters, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has successfully generated most enabling units for the upcoming year. The generation of such resources, however, is a time-consuming process that can stall the full deployment of a mission, and Member States are therefore urged to consider providing them early on.

32. Several Member States have approached the United Nations with offers to contribute resources to peace operations in discrete units staffed by government-provided civilians, to perform specialist functions such as medical support. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is exploring mechanisms to draw on such offers, including through applying COE procedures. Feedback and guidance from the Committee on this matter would be welcome.

F. Personnel

33. Recruiting and retaining qualified civilians for peacekeeping operations remain both primary objectives and particular challenges for the Organization. The number of international and local staff serving in peacekeeping missions has increased to 11,550, with an additional 2,400 yet to be deployed to meet staffing requirements posed by new and expanding missions. As operations have expanded in complexity, risk and hardship, the competition with other organizations for the most valuable expertise and relevant experience has grown in turn. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, together with the Office of Human Resources Management, is currently in active dialogue with Member States in addressing this and related issues (see A/59/291).

34. The human resources strategy of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations broadly involves five main areas: (a) developing mission templates to ensure the presence of adequate skills and expertise; (b) direct outreach to Member States to increase awareness of qualified potential candidates; (c) refining appropriate contractual arrangements and fair and equitable conditions of service; (d) a strategic approach to training and career development; and (e) a meaningful performance appraisal system.

35. To support these areas, several planning tools are in development, including flexible, standardized mission templates, expanded generic job profiles and the identification of critical start-up lists for small, medium and large-scale missions. In addition, a number of recruitment mechanisms are facilitating the identification and selection of personnel while adhering to a competitive and transparent recruitment process. Galaxy is now the single web-based platform for advertising mission posts. The system feeds into an integrated application called Nucleus, which supports the processing of applicants and through which field managers can access vetted rosters of candidates. The experience of recent mission launches has compelled the Department to re-evaluate the rapid deployment roster concept with a view to articulating further recommendations to the General Assembly in a report due for publication in spring 2005.

G. Training

36. To augment the above-mentioned efforts to field high-calibre personnel, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is developing a department-wide training policy that would coordinate specialized training, integrate the training of different categories of personnel and provide a comprehensive approach to the training and development of civilian field staff.

37. In line with recommendations of the Special Committee, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations successfully developed standardized generic training modules, level I, while the standardized training modules II (specialists) and III (senior mission management) are near finalization. The Department will continue to engage with national peacekeeping training centres and training focal points to facilitate standardization in pre-deployment training through the Training Recognition Project. The Department further facilitates the sponsoring of students from emerging troop-contributing countries to take part in national courses offered by troop-contributing countries with established peacekeeping training centres. To

support Member States' training initiatives, the Department continues to update and distribute a number of peacekeeping training publications, and there is an ongoing effort to translate these into all six United Nations languages.

H. Strategic deployment stocks and pre-mandate commitment authority

38. Pre-mandate commitment authority has provided early funding for the deployment of initial civilian and military personnel, transportation of strategic deployment stocks and the purchase of materiel and services. In all cases, it was used at or near the funding cap of $50 million per mission. Recent experience will be reviewed with the Controller's office, with a view to making proposals regarding existing mechanisms and financial ceilings.

39. The initial procurement of strategic deployment stocks is almost completed. The stocks have provided essential support for rapid deployment. In the light of experience, some adjustments have proved necessary. For example, procedures to expedite replenishment are being explored in consultation with the Department of Management, and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is now focusing on improving the level of support from strategic deployment stocks to new missions, and developing the composition and availability of equipment and supplies in the stocks.

I. Cooperation with troop-contributing countries

40. In its 2004 report, the Special Committee placed emphasis on close cooperation and consultation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and troop-contributing countries. It is indeed vital that troop-contributing countries be fully apprised of mission requirements and new developments and that they be prepared to meet the demands of missions. The Department continues to hold weekly meetings with troop-contributing countries to update them on relevant events that have occurred in peacekeeping operations and to make its weekly briefing note on field operations available to them. Dedicated meetings have taken place at various stages for new or ongoing peacekeeping operations, including with regard to changes in or the renewal of mandates. In addition, the Department has markedly increased the number of briefings, meetings and selection assistance visits to Member States.

III. Implementation of complex, multidimensional mandates

41. In its 2004 report the Special Committee stressed the need for comprehensive strategies for complex peacekeeping operations and for strengthened cooperation and coordination among specialized agencies, funds and programmes within the United Nations system, as well as with the Bretton Woods institutions and the range of other actors engaged on the ground.

42. The need to put peacekeeping within an overall context of assistance for peacebuilding and longer-term development was also echoed in paragraph 224 of the High-level Panel's report. An overall strategy integrating peacekeeping,

peacebuilding and development approaches must be articulated through an integrated planning process at the Headquarters level and the coordination of backstopping and management support for the mission. At the mission level, the integration of the various components of the mission must be carried out by the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and the Deputy Special Representatives. Missions must also create close partnerships with non-United Nations partners, integral to success in the transition to peace. Within each mission, the functional strategies articulated for each element of the mandate, such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, rule of law, and security-sector reform must be implemented by a range of actors. Finally, at the level of administrative and logistical support, integration through the use of common services can provide efficiencies and cost savings.

43. Integration at various levels has progressed somewhat, particularly with regard to inter-agency policy development on disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and the rule of law. In other areas, more work is required to resolve dilemmas arising from issues such as humanitarian space in the context of integrated operations, differing organizational cultures, rules and regulations, and disparities between sources of funding for different elements of integrated mandates.

44. The surge in the level of peacekeeping activity over the past year has strained the capacity of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to establish and effectively manage the operations currently under its direction. It should be recalled that the augmented staffing for the Department, which was authorized as part of the Brahimi process, was determined on the basis of the significantly lower level of activity pertaining at that time. It is the intention of the Department to seek some limited additional staff resources in the next peacekeeping support account budget cycle to provide effective operational backstopping to current missions in the context of the surge, and in some of the key substantive and thematic areas now common in complex operations.

A. Mission integration

45. Many of the attributes of the Integrated Mission Task Force (IMTF) concept and practices have been adapted and applied by mission planning groups. Full implementation of the IMTF concept as intended in the Brahimi report, however, remains a work in progress. Practical difficulties remain, such as the undetermined length of the planning process, the difficulty in getting staff seconded to the Task Force for extended periods and the competing demands on Special Representatives of the Secretary-General to focus on political negotiations while IMTF planning is under way.

46. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is refining and discussing with United Nations partners an integrated mission planning process, which could serve as a basis for a common, system-wide approach to integrated mission planning, applicable to any stage of United Nations engagement. A handbook of guidelines and a training course are currently under development, in consultation with partners, to facilitate the application of the process.

47. Also, in collaboration with the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Development Group, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has commissioned a study of integrated missions, expected to be

completed in March 2005, to draw the lessons of recent integrated operations and provide recommendations regarding the integration of United Nations entities in the context of peace operations.

B. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

48. Encouraging inter-agency work has been done on the integration of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration approaches across the United Nations system. In April 2004 the Department of Peacekeeping Operations initiated the establishment of an inter-agency working group to develop clear and usable policies, guidelines and procedures on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. With the involvement of several United Nations departments, funds and agencies, guidance is being drafted on some 30 areas of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, ranging from strategic principles to specific activities in a peacekeeping mission. The Department aims to conduct a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration simulation exercise in spring 2005 to test this first draft of the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards, which was discussed at an inter-agency workshop in October 2004, before rolling it out. In addition, the Department and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have started developing a web-based United Nations disarmament, demobilization and reintegration resource centre.

49. This collaboration with United Nations agencies has translated into better cooperation in the field. In Haiti and the Sudan, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNDP have integrated their staff resources in a single disarmament, demobilization and reintegration unit. This has promoted a holistic approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, developing strategies aimed at minimizing the gap between disarmament and demobilization on one hand and reintegration on the other. This effort will be expanded to include representatives of other United Nations agencies, with a view to applying this model to other peacekeeping missions.

50. However, more is required in order to achieve successful disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes that can truly help to lay the foundations for lasting peace in post-conflict countries. A key area remains early, adequate and sustainable funding to support the development and timely implementation of comprehensive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration strategies.

C. Rule of law

51. In 2004 the Special Committee requested the Secretariat to provide an assessment of coordination with other parts of the United Nations system in the field of the rule of law. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations chairs a network of United Nations rule-of-law focal points and is taking a lead role in coordinating responses to many of the recommendations contained in my recent report on the rule of law (S/2004/616). The Department is also stressing the need to integrate rule-of-law approaches with other United Nations partners and to reach out more systematically to partners outside the system.

52. The Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations planned judicial and corrections components for seven peace operations, facilitated the deployment and start-up of rule-of-law components in five such missions and supported the ongoing policy dialogue with Member States. As a result, Security Council mandates now regularly include rule-of-law, judicial and corrections issues which are central to peace and security, while peacekeeping budgets provide better support for judicial and corrections matters.

53. The Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Unit recently briefed Member States on its work, collaboration and partnerships and critical human resources needs. Additional resources are needed to support our peacekeeping operations today, and this will not prejudice ongoing longer-term consideration of enhancing the rule-of-law capacities system-wide.

D. Security-sector reform

54. In paragraph 79 of its 2004 report the Special Committee encouraged the Secretariat to develop strategies based on lessons learned in the area of security-sector reform. In complex transitions out of conflict, key development objectives and structural stability cannot be achieved in the absence of security. Efforts to reform the security sector are critical for ensuring that security institutions can play an effective and legitimate role in providing external and internal security for citizens.

55. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is developing policies to engage more effectively in security-sector reform, particularly in providing relevant technical advice and advocacy in peacekeeping missions where it is mandated to assist, and when providing advice to negotiations as part of peacemaking. Where appropriate, the Department will also seek better engagement with partners that undertake this type of activity on a bilateral basis. Notwithstanding these efforts, further discussion is required to define the United Nations role in activities related to security-sector reform.

E. Mine action

56. Inter-agency coordination in mine action has also progressed and has been increasingly integrated into mission planning.

57. The Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action endorsed the Framework for Mine Action Planning and Rapid Response in November 2004, which provides, on the basis of voluntary funding, a standby mechanism for the rapid deployment of commercial survey and demining capacities that can be used to facilitate the start-up of new missions or provide a surge capacity in existing missions when the need arises.

58. Mine action expertise was included, where appropriate, during pre-deployment visits to troop-contributing countries. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is developing operating procedures with troop-contributing countries that are currently conducting demining operations in the field. This has been facilitated through the integration of mine-action coordination centres with force demining personnel and through the provision of assets to improve coordination, training and

operations in support of both force and mission requirements. The Information Management System for Mine Action is utilized in eight operations to support coordination, while the electronic mine information network (www.mineaction.org) has seen a drastic increase in usage worldwide.

F. Gender

59. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations continues to make progress in implementing Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women, peace and security. Gender expertise is now included in pre-mandate assessments and planning, and gender-adviser positions have been established in 10 peacekeeping missions, as well as at Headquarters. Gender advisers are supporting gender-mainstreaming activities in the different functional areas of missions, while also supporting capacity-building initiatives for counterparts within government and civil society in the host country. Gender units therefore need to be sufficiently staffed and resourced. The ongoing support of Member States is critical in this regard.

60. Mandatory pre-deployment gender training for military and civilian police personnel will build awareness of and sensitivity to gender issues and the human rights of women and girls, while also contributing to confidence-building between local populations and peacekeeping personnel. The Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations was launched in October 2004. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations also issued a policy on human trafficking and has since been developing a package of training materials and guidance. A standard generic training module I and generic gender training modules are available to Member States from the Training and Evaluation Service. Member States are urged to use these materials in their national pre-deployment processes.

61. To ensure appropriate medical services for female troops and staff members in peacekeeping missions, at least one United Nations hospital in each mission should offer medical and reproductive-health services to female staff members and troops. Troop-contributing countries providing level 2 and above hospitals are urged to deploy female staff to those hospitals.

G. HIV/AIDS

62. All peacekeeping missions have either an HIV/AIDS policy adviser or a focal point, creating a proactive network across all operations. The deployment of the HIV/AIDS adviser in Haiti in advance of major troop deployments set a new precedent for peacekeeping operations, which has been repeated in the Sudan. Member States are urged to include HIV/AIDS peer educators in troop deployments.

63. The subject of HIV/AIDS is being mainstreamed into mission functions such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, through collaboration with relevant United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations and national AIDS programmes, with increasing outreach to host populations.

H. Common services

64. The integration of logistics and administrative services between United Nations entities in a mission area can provide for efficiencies and cost savings. Experience gained in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq has demonstrated that the mission and country team partners can share premises and other services. The planning effort for Iraq aims to further develop common services for the United Nations in the areas of transportation, communications and security, as a basis upon which to build a shared approach to meeting other common needs.

I. Regionalization: cooperation between peacekeeping operations

65. In 2004 the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has pursued greater cooperation between peacekeeping operations in the same region. While United Nations rules and regulations are designed around individual missions and their budgets, cooperation between missions operating in the same region can create efficiencies through the sharing of logistics, equipment and administrative support. Questions with regard to budget oversight and responsibility, control over assets and logistical cooperation between missions remain.

66. In West Africa, arrangements were made between UNAMSIL, UNMIL and UNOCI to share limited logistics, materiel and administrative resources. With respect to military operations, UNAMSIL supported the pre-deployment training for United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire and UNMIL personnel.

67. In the Great Lakes region, in the near future, MONUC and ONUB will share force enablers and maritime units to the extent possible, while letters of assist would include provisions for the use of assets on both sides of the border.

68. While missions adhere to their mandates and therefore focus on their own area of operation, some issues, such as cross-border movements of refugees and insurgents, require a regional level of attention. Among the many examples of the sharing of information and analysis between regional missions, UNMIL, UNOCI and UNAMSIL have developed information-sharing channels at the level of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and between functional staff on a range of issues. Regular meetings between Force Commanders, exchanges of liaison officers and regular exchanges of information between their joint mission assessment cells are taking place as well. The Force Commanders and Chief of Staff of United Nations missions in the Middle East also hold regular information-sharing meetings.

J. Lessons learned and implementation of best practices

69. The Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit continues to play an integral part in the development of peacekeeping guidance mechanisms and tools, as well as in the creation of lessons-learned reports and policy papers. In doing so, it has actively sought to cooperate with Member States, regional organizations and other United Nations entities. Results of the Unit's work have been posted on its web site (http://pbpu.unlb.org) throughout the year, and Member States have recently been briefed on the Unit's work in more detail.

70. The Unit is leading a Department-wide effort to develop operational and administrative guidance for all functional areas, with the aim of increasing efficiency and effectiveness and enhancing accountability. Related to this guidance project, the Unit is developing practical tools, such as after-action reports, for the field missions to capture and share best practices. The field network of best-practices officers, who are currently being recruited for Haiti, Burundi and Côte d'Ivoire, will be vital to the implementation of both efforts.

IV. Regional arrangements and enhancing African peacekeeping capacities

71. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has continued to develop relationships with regional and international organizations with the aim of increasing coordination and collaboration in the field of peacekeeping operations as well as enhancing African peacekeeping capacities. As stated above, the complexity of today's multidimensional peace operations demands that United Nations and regional arrangements explore complementary, flexible and nimble ways in which the unprecedented challenges of peace operations can be met. The international community should strive to build an interlocking system of capabilities able to respond to and deal with the range of demands related to peace operations.

A. Cooperation with regional arrangements

72. A number of positive initiatives are being developed to create strategic partnerships to meet the current peacekeeping challenges. Concepts being advanced by the European Union (EU) for battle groups and an informal clearing house to better facilitate the participation of EU members in United Nations peacekeeping are important examples. EU can also participate by contributing vital enabling units with niche capabilities, such as combat engineers, air-traffic support elements and close air support assets. Discussions are ongoing as to how these units could be deployed, and under what command and control arrangements.

73. Increasingly, forces from regional organizations are being deployed to respond quickly to fill the gap while the United Nations generates the forces necessary to deploy a peace operation. In the Sudan, the need for a small advance element was met by the Standby Forces High Readiness Brigade, which deployed at the request of the United Nations as part of the advance mission in the Sudan in June and July 2004.

74. In Burundi, in view of financial and logistics constraints, the African Union (AU) requested that its peacekeeping mission, the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB), be taken over by the United Nations. Following the establishment of ONUB on 1 June 2004, 2,641 AMIB troops and military observers were re-hatted. On that same day, MINUSTAH formally took over authority from the Multinational Interim Force (MIF), and Chilean MIF forces were reassigned to MINUSTAH as United Nations peacekeepers. By 25 June, Canadian MIF troops were re-hatted as United Nations peacekeepers until the end of July 2004. To generate forces for MINUSTAH, the Secretariat worked closely with the Common Market of the South as well as with individual Central American troop-contributing countries.

75. In its 2004 report, the Special Committee encouraged the Secretariat to seek additional surge planning capacity from external sources on an objective and mission-oriented basis. Such standing military planning capabilities, however, are minimal in most regional organizations. With the aim of facilitating handover or takeover of military tasks between entities, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is developing guidelines for such situations in consultation with EU, AU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The United Nations will also explore possibilities for joint command post simulation exercises with partner organizations to increase interoperability.

B. Enhancing African peacekeeping capacities

76. AU and subregional organizations such as ECOWAS have played an increasingly prominent role in the maintenance of peace and security in Africa. The achievements of the ECOWAS interventions in Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire and of AMIB before the deployment of full-scale United Nations peacekeeping operations have highlighted the importance of a close partnership with African organizations, which the United Nations will continue to do its part to foster. Ongoing innovations by the African Union to build a regional framework for peacekeeping are also noteworthy, as are bilateral efforts to assist AU and individual African States to build peacekeeping capacity.

77. Recent experience has demonstrated that in spite of political will and commitment to participate in peacekeeping activities, most African troop-contributing countries, and regional and subregional organizations, are constrained by inadequate strategic planning capabilities and serious difficulties in the deployment and sustainment of sizeable forces. As stated in my report on the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity (A/59/591), the United Nations is committed to enhancing African Member States' ability to contribute effectively to both United Nations and African-led peacekeeping operations in Africa and elsewhere, while assisting them in the development of capacities for the planning and management of peace operations.

78. In this regard, the United Nations Secretariat has provided technical advice, equipment sustainability and training. Aside from assisting AU in the conceptualization of the African Standby Force and the Military Staff Committee, the United Nations provided it with informal technical advice in preparation for its mission in Burundi and the deployment of its military observers in Darfur. The United Nations has established an assistance cell at AU headquarters to assist the AU Commission in managing its mission in Darfur. There has also been cooperation to strengthen the capacity of the AU Situation Room in Addis Ababa. The next phase of cooperation is aimed at enhancing communication between AU headquarters and field missions and offices by introducing improved electronic equipment and providing training to AU Situation Room personnel. In addition, there have been preliminary contacts with both ECOWAS and the Economic Community of Central African States regarding the setting up of a monitoring capability similar to that of AU.

79. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has provided or supported training initiatives, such as generic peacekeeping training for over 200 military and

civilian police training officers, the sponsoring of officers from emerging African troop-contributing countries to courses run by current troop-contributing countries and pre-deployment training for individual contingents. United Nations peacekeeping training doctrine and materials are also geared towards augmenting African capacity to respond to the multidimensional nature of peacekeeping, by including issues such as human rights, gender, HIV/AIDS, rule of law and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

80. In order to further enhance African peacekeeping capacity, the following should be pursued by all actors: (a) the development of peacekeeping doctrine and training standards; (b) the provision of logistic support, including strategic sealift and airlift capabilities; and (c) the provision of financial resources. My report on the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacities provides a more detailed description of the various types of assistance that the United Nations could provide in each of those areas, given a clear mandate and sufficient resources.

V. Conduct and discipline

81. Over the past year, the number of allegations of sexual misconduct against United Nations peacekeeping personnel increased significantly. Between June and September 2004, the Office of Internal Oversight Services investigated 72 allegations, against both military and civilian peacekeeping personnel, of sexual exploitation and abuse of local Congolese girls in the town of Bunia alone, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I am outraged at any such acts of gross misconduct, and all measures will be taken to ensure that those responsible are held fully accountable. I therefore invited the Permanent Representative of Jordan, Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein, to act as my Adviser on the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeeping personnel.

82. In October 2004, my Adviser on sexual exploitation and abuse undertook a preliminary assessment of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Further to that visit and the findings of the Office of Internal Oversight Services investigation, I am deeply concerned to learn that the problem appears to be more serious and widespread than previously known. My Adviser has initiated informal consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries on the handling of cases of misconduct on the part of United Nations peacekeeping personnel, in lieu of the request by the Special Committee to convene a meeting with troop- and police-contributing countries to develop a common understanding and agreed procedures to handle cases of alleged misconduct by United Nations peacekeeping personnel.

83. Were the Special Committee to seek a comprehensive report with recommendations on the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeeping personnel, I would be prepared to undertake such a request, with due regard to the sensitivity of the subject matter. The report would likely have wider implications for the handling of misconduct in general, including the monitoring of and reporting on misconduct. In the meantime, the disciplinary directives continue to be the main mechanism for dealing with cases of alleged misconduct.

84. A number of ad hoc efforts, focusing on the prevention and identification of sexual misconduct, are under way. These include the piloting of training materials on sexual exploitation and abuse and the establishment of Personnel Conduct Officer positions in some of the larger missions.

VI. Security and safety of United Nations and associated personnel

85. The security and safety of United Nations staff continues to be a central concern as the United Nations carries out its peacekeeping mandates, often under dangerous conditions. The abduction of three United Nations staff members last October in Afghanistan reminded us of the challenge of increased direct threat faced by United Nations staff.

86. Further to my report on a strengthened and unified security management system for the United Nations (A/59/365 and Corr.1), submitted to the General Assembly at its current session, on 22 December 2004 the Fifth Committee of the Assembly endorsed a new United Nations-wide security management system. It also recommended that the Assembly request me to provide, in the context of the implementation report to be presented at its sixtieth session, information on strengthening the cooperation between the new Department of Safety and Security and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations with respect to security decisions that may affect the conduct of peacekeeping operations, in the framework of the unified security management system, which would be led by the Department of Safety and Security.

87. In the light of the frequency and complexity of crisis situations affecting peacekeeping operations, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has made significant efforts to develop better crisis-response procedures and to support missions with integrated, real-time guidance. The Situation Centre plays a central role as the coordinating body for any crisis response by the Department, managing the information flow between the field and Headquarters. In order to fulfil these tasks effectively, the 24-hour duty desks operated by the Situation Centre need to be strengthened.

88. The introduction of joint mission analysis cells, aimed at enhancing capacity to gather information for threat and risk analysis and security assessment in the field, has met with varying degrees of success, but thus far no mission has been able to introduce the concept in its full, multidimensional context, because funding has not yet been approved for the civilian posts within the cells. The effective establishment of a joint mission analysis cell within a United Nations mission in the Sudan will be of critical importance for its success.

89. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations does not have full-time staff dedicated to safety issues per se, with the exception of the area of aviation safety. In order to better coordinate and direct activities relating to safety matters, the terms of reference of the Department's Safety Council, established in 2002, have recently been revised and a new programme of safety-related work is being developed. However, in the absence of dedicated resources, the Department's ability to complete the programme of safety-related work will be limited by competing priorities.

90. The Department is attempting to improve its cooperation with Member States with regard to the conduct of investigations or inquiries into incidents leading to loss of life or serious injury among peacekeeping personnel. In addition, the effectiveness of the Boards of Inquiry is being reviewed.

VII. Observations

91. The formulation and development of each of the major proposals for strengthening peace operations over the past four years has benefited from a close dialogue with the Member States. The present report contains a number of proposals, including on strategic reserves and standing police capacity, that will do a great deal to further the efforts of United Nations peace operations to meet the growing demands and complexity our missions face today. I invite the Special Committee to discuss and develop these proposals with the Secretariat with a view to bringing them before the relevant legislative bodies for approval.

92. In conclusion, I wish once again to pay tribute to the men and women who have served and continue to serve in peacekeeping missions, and to those who have given their lives in the pursuit of international peace and security.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 19* (A/58/19).